We claim:

1. A method of remotely generating an instrument, comprising:

a) receiving a request from a customer for the instrument;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image; and

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the first security image is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the second security image comprises the word "void".

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the second security image comprises the word "void".

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the instrument comprises a monetary instrument.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the instrument represents certified funds.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the funds are withdrawn from the customer's deposit account.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein the instrument comprises at least one of a stock certificate and a bond.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein the request comprises at least one of an amount, a denomination and a currency of the monetary instrument.

16. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of e) associating a unique identification number with the instrument.

17. A method of remotely generating an instrument representing certified funds, the method comprising:

a) receiving a request for the instrument from a customer;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image; and

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer,

wherein the first security image is a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed and is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument,

the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image, the second security image being invisible on the instrument and visible on a photocopy of the instrument, and

the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

18. A system that remotely generates an instrument, comprising:

a processor that receives from a customer a request for the instrument, generates the instrument in electronic form, and adds a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image; and

a communications module that transmits the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the first security image is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

23. The system of claim 18, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

25. The system of claim 18, wherein the instrument comprises a monetary instrument that represents certified funds.

26. The system of claim 25, wherein the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

27. The system of claim 18, wherein the instrument has associated with it a unique identification number.

28. A system that remotely generates an instrument representing certified funds, the system comprising:

a processor that receives a request from a customer for the instrument, generates the instrument in electronic form, and adds a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image; and

a communications module that transmits the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer,

wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed and is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument,

the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image, the second security image being invisible on the instrument and visible on a photocopy of the instrument, and

the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

29. A method of distributing and verifying the authenticity of an instrument, comprising:

a) receiving customer information and a request for the instrument from a customer;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image;

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer as the instrument;

e) receiving a request for verification from a recipient of the printed instrument, the recipient receiving the printed instrument from the customer;

f) verifying whether the instrument is authentic based on the customer information; and

g) communicating to the recipient whether the instrument is authentic.

30. The method of claim 29, wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the first security image is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the second security image comprises the word "void".

35. The method of claim 29, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the second security image comprises the word "void".

38. The method of claim 29, wherein the instrument comprises a monetary instrument.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein the instrument represents certified funds.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

41. The method of claim 40, wherein the funds are withdrawn from the customer's deposit account.

42. The method of claim 38, wherein the request comprises at least one of an amount, a denomination and a currency of the monetary instrument.

43. The method of claim 29, wherein the instrument comprises at least one of a stock certificate and a bond.

44. The method of claim 29, wherein the instrument has associated with it a unique identification number.

45. The method of claim 29, wherein the request for verification and the communication are transmitted over a data link.

46. The method of claim 45, wherein the data link is the Internet.

47. The method of claim 29, wherein the request for verification and the communication are transmitted over a telephone line.

48. The method of claim 29, wherein the verification comprises:

h) receiving from the recipient submitted customer information; and

i) comparing the submitted customer information to the customer information received from the customer.

49. The method of claim 48, wherein the submitted customer information comprises a customer name and a customer address.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein the verification further comprises

j) receiving from the recipient a submitted instrument identification number; and

k) comparing the submitted instrument identification number to an assigned instrument identification number assigned to the instrument before the composite image is transmitted to the customer.

51. A method of distributing and verifying the authenticity of an instrument representing certified funds, comprising:

a) receiving customer information and a request for the instrument from a customer;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image;

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer as the instrument;

e) receiving a request for verification from a recipient of the

printed instrument, the recipient receiving the printed instrument from the customer;

f) verifying whether the instrument is authentic based on the customer information; and

g) communicating to the recipient whether the instrument is authentic,

wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed and is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument,

the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image, the second security image being invisible on the instrument and visible on a photocopy of the instrument, and

the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

52. A system that distributes and verifies the authenticity of an instrument, comprising:

a first processor that receives customer information and a request for the instrument from a customer, generates the instrument in electronic form, and adds a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image;

a first communications module that transmits the composite image

in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer as the instrument;

a second processor that

receives a request for verification from a recipient of the printed instrument, the recipient receiving the printed instrument from the customer, and

verifies whether the instrument is authentic based on the customer information; and

a second communications module that transmits a communication to the recipient, the communication indicating whether the authenticity of the instrument is verified.

53. The system of claim 52, wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed.

54. The system of claim 53, wherein the first security image is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument.

55. The system of claim 54, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

56. The system of claim 55, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

57. The system of claim 52, wherein the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image.

58. The system of claim 57, wherein the second security image is invisible on the instrument and is visible on a photocopy of the instrument.

59. The system of claim 52, wherein the instrument comprises a monetary instrument that represents certified funds.

60. The system of claim 59, wherein the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

61. The system of claim 52, wherein the instrument has associated with it a unique identification number.

62. The system of claim 52, wherein the verification comprises:

receiving from the recipient submitted customer information; and

comparing the submitted customer information to the customer information received from the customer.

63. The system of claim 62, wherein the submitted customer information comprises a customer name and a customer address.

64. The system of claim 63, wherein the verification further comprises

receiving from the recipient a submitted instrument identification number; and

comparing the submitted instrument identification number to an assigned instrument identification number assigned to the instrument before the composite image is transmitted to the customer.

65. A system that distributes and verifies the authenticity of an instrument representing certified funds, comprising:

a first processor that receives customer information and a request for the instrument from a customer, generates the instrument in electronic form, and adds a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image;

a first communications module that transmits the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer as the instrument;

a second processor that

receives a request for verification from a recipient of the printed instrument, the recipient receiving the printed instrument from the customer, and

verifies whether the instrument is authentic based on the

customer information, and

a second communications module that transmits a communication to the recipient, the communication indicating whether the authenticity of the instrument is verified,

wherein the first security image comprises a watermark that appears as a part of the composite image when printed and is invisible on a photocopy of the instrument,

the composite image is for printing on a medium having a second security image, the second security image being invisible on the instrument and visible on a photocopy of the instrument, and

the instrument is generated by an issuing financial institution, the funds are certified by the issuing financial institution and the customer holds a deposit account with the issuing financial institution.

66. An electronically readable recording medium containing a program that when run by a processor performs the steps of:

a) receiving a request from a customer for a remotely generated instrument;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image; and

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer.

67. An electronically readable recording medium containing a program that when run by a processor performs the steps of:

a) receiving customer information and a request for a remotely generated instrument from a customer;

b) generating the instrument in electronic form;

c) adding a first security image in electronic form to the electronic form of the instrument to create a composite image;

d) transmitting the composite image in electronic form to the customer for printing by the customer as the instrument;

e) receiving a request for verification from a recipient of the printed instrument, the recipient receiving the printed instrument from the customer;

f) verifying whether the instrument is authentic based on the customer information; and

g) communicating to the recipient whether the instrument is authentic.

68. A printer, comprising:

a processor;

a print engine controlled by the processor;

a communication module controlled by the processor; and

a program that when run by the processor performs the steps of:

a) receiving a remotely generated composite image in electronic form through the communication module, the composite image being remotely generated at an issuing institution and comprising a verifiable instrument image and a first security image; and

b) instructing the print engine to print the composite image.